

COMMENTS AND RESPONSE

In view of the comments below, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the present application including pending claims 1-24, and withdraw the pending claim rejections.

Allowable Claims

The Examiner has indicated that claims 1-9 are allowable. Applicant respectfully acknowledges the allowability of these claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected claims 10-19, 23, and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over United States Patent No. 6,304,623 to Richards et al. (“Richards”) in view of United States Patent No. 5,890,051 to Schlang et al. (“Schlang”) and United States Patent No. 5,510,800 to McEwan (“McEwan”).

By this response, Applicants have cancelled claims 10-19, 23, and 24, thus rendering moot this ground of rejection.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 10-19, 23, and 24 under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Richards in view of Schlang and McEwan.

The Examiner has rejected claims 20-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Richards and Schlang and McEwan in view of United States Patent No. 5,901,183 to Garin et al. (“Garin”).

By this response, Applicants have cancelled claims 20-22, thus rendering moot this ground of rejection.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 20-22 under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Richards and Schlang and McEwan in view of Garin.

Conclusion

Accordingly, Applicant observes that pending claims 1-9 are allowable. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner issue a notice of allowance for this application at an early date. If the Examiner has any suggestions, comments, or questions, calls are welcome at the telephone number below.

Although it is not anticipated that any additional fees are due or payable, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully Submitted,



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